

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-27 (canceled).

Claim 28 (canceled).

Claim 29 (currently amended). ~~The surgical instrument of claim 28~~ A surgical instrument for use in corneal reconstruction, comprising:

a connecting end; and

a hollow spatula-like member having a proximal end supported by said connecting end and a distal tip opposite said proximal end, said spatula-like member including an arcuate distal section formed in a plane along a curvature, and further including a fluid passageway therein, said fluid passageway being in fluid communication with a fluid source, with one side of said spatula-like member further including a plurality of apertures wherefrom fluid from said fluid source may be ejected,

wherein said spatula-like member has a trapezoidal cross-sectional shape, and

wherein said surgical instrument is adapted to separate corneal surface epithelium from the underlying cornea.

Claim 30 (canceled).

Claim 31 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim ~~29~~ 28 wherein said distal tip includes an aperture whereby fluid from said fluid source may be ejected onto the cornea.

Claim 32 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein said fluid source is a syringe connected to said connecting end.

Claim 33 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein said spatula-like member has a height of no greater than about 0.5 millimeters.

Claim 34 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein said distal section has a length of about 10 millimeters to about 15 millimeters.

Claims 35-38 (canceled).

Claim 39 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein there are 15 to 25 apertures.

Claim 40 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein the diameter of said apertures ranges from about 0.05 millimeters to 0.10 millimeters.

Claim 41 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein the apertures are evenly spaced about 0.4 millimeters apart along said side.

Claim 42 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein said distal section curvature has a radius of curvature between about 8 millimeters and about 12 millimeters.

Claim 43 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein said proximal end is oriented with respect to the distal section to form a vertical angle of about 40 degrees to about 60 degrees.

Claim 44 (previously presented). The surgical instrument of claim 29 wherein said trapezoidal spatula-like member has a top side and an opposing contact side, said top side having a width of about 0.5 millimeters to about 1.0 millimeters, and said contact side having a width of about 0.75 millimeters to about 1.25 millimeters.

Claim 45 (currently amended). The surgical instrument of claim 29 ~~28~~ wherein said distal section curvature has a radius of curvature between about 8 millimeters and about 11.5 millimeters.